

Cups of Coffee: Phil Morrison

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Phil Morrison makes his major league debut with the Pittsburgh Pirates on September 30, 1921, exactly one year and two days after his younger, but more accomplished brother [Johnny Morrison](#) debuted with the Corsairs.

A tall (6'2") right-handed pitcher, Morrison relieves [Rip Wheeler](#) with one out in the bottom of the eighth inning in a 12-4 loss to the St. Louis Cardinals on [Rogers Hornsby Day](#) at [Sportsman Park](#). Morrison pitches a scoreless 2/3rds of an inning, allowing one hit (a double to [Heinie Mueller](#)) and striking out one ([Austin McHenry](#)).

Born on October 18, 1894, in Rockport, Indiana, a small town on the Ohio River, Morrison enlists in the Army as an 18-year-old on February 21, 1917. Morrison is sent to Europe as a member of the [American Expeditionary Force](#), where he is involved in numerous engagements with the German armed forces.

Discharged from the Army on August 19, 1920, Morrison signs with the Birmingham Barons of the Southern Association 11 days later. He makes an inauspicious pro debut as the starting pitcher against the Mobile Bears on September 8, where he allows two unearned runs on one hit and one walk before being relieved by [Roy Meeker](#) with one out in the bottom of the first inning. The 19-year-old Meeker will allow only one more run in 8 2/3 innings, but absorbs the loss in a 3-2 Mobile victory.

Morrison finishes the 1920 season with one win and two losses in three appearances with the Barons, including a 13-0 five-hit shutout of New Orleans on September 14. His brother Johnny is 26-13 with the Barons and earns a late season promotion to the Pirates in September.

The Army veteran is a 20-game winner in each of his first two full seasons with Birmingham. In 1921, he is fourth in the Southern Association in wins (21) and second in strikeouts (157). A year later, the curve ball specialist ties for second in wins (22) and is third in strikeouts (127).

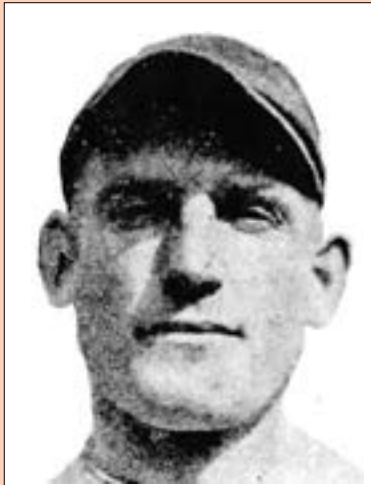


On July 20, 1921, Morrison pitches a seven-inning no-hitter in a 14-0 win over Mobile.

Despite his 22-win season, Morrison is not invited to the Pirates' spring training in 1923 and his once-promising career takes a turn for the worse. He is 6-20 in his last full season in professional baseball with a career-worst 4.05 ERA splitting time between Birmingham and Atlanta.

Plagued by rheumatism and undetermined other ailments, Morrison fails to show up to Atlanta's 1924 spring training in Griffin, Georgia, and elects to stay in Owensboro, Kentucky. Signed by the local semipro team, the Owensboro All-Stars, Morrison is scheduled to pitch several times but is unable to perform because of the rheumatism.

The illness is severe enough for him to refrain from playing baseball in 1924 and 1925, outside from a few games with semipro clubs near his home. During his recovery, he is employed at the [Hercules Buggy Company](#) in Evansville, Indiana.



Phil Morrison
1923 Atlanta Crackers

September 30, 1921
Pittsburgh Pirates at St. Louis Cardinals
Sportsman Park, St. Louis, Missouri

Cards Make Merry on Hornsby Day

PITTSBURGH				ST. LOUIS							
	abr.	h.	r.	o.	abr.	h.	r.	o.			
Bigbee, cf....	4	1	1	2	1	Smith, rf..	5	1	1	1	0
Cary, lf.....	4	1	2	4	0	Four'er, 1b	4	0	1	1	0
Maran'ile, ss..	3	0	1	2	3	Stock, 3b..	4	2	1	1	1
Robertson, rf.	3	2	0	1	0	Horn'y, 2b	5	3	3	4	0
Tierney, 2b...	2	0	0	4	2	Mueller, cf	3	2	4	2	0
Barnhart, 3b..	4	0	1	1	1	McH'ry, lf	3	3	1	3	0
Grimm, 1b....	4	0	1	8	0	Lavan, ss.	5	1	3	0	4
Carlson, p....	2	0	0	0	3	Clem's, c.	4	0	4	5	0
Wheeler, p....	1	0	0	0	1	Haines, p.	3	0	0	0	3
Gooch, c.....	4	0	0	2	1						
Morrison, p...	0	0	0	0	0						
Rohwer, x....	1	0	0	0	0						

Totals.... 32 4 6 24 14 Totals. 38 12 18 27 8
x Batted for Morrison in ninth.
Pittsburgh 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 3 0-4
St. Louis 0 1 0 3 4 1 0 3 x-12
Errors—Pittsburgh, 4 (Cary, Maranville, 2; Gooch); St. Louis, 1 (Lavan).
Two-base hits—Grimm, Hornsby, 2; Barnhart, Mueller. Three-base hit—Clemens. Home runs—Mueller, Hornsby.



Jughandle Morrison
Pittsburgh Pirates

Phil Morrison [2 of 2]:

Morrison returns to pro baseball in 1926, when he is invited to Pittsburgh's spring training, where he performs well in several spring training games.

Failing to make a talented Pirate pitching staff, Morrison is purchased on April 5 by the Indianapolis Indians' manager **Donie Bush** of the American Association where he pitches in six games before being optioned to the Little Rock Travellers of the Southern Association.

After one appearances with the Travellers, Morrison leaves the team and ends his pro career by returning home to Owensboro to have his pitching arm treated by Dr. Rash, a local physician. Rash, who is not a baseball fan, alarms the Pittsburgh Pirates - who have suspended Johnny Morrison for leaving Pittsburgh without permission - by telling them that "Morrison" has a broken bone in his elbow, not knowing he is treating "Jughead's" younger brother.

Morrison continues to pitch for various semipro teams until the age of 37 when he toils two years (1934-1935) for the Ken-Rad Tubemakers.

Phil Morrison Year by Year:

Year	Team	League	Level	W-L	GP	INN	H	BB	SO	ERA
1920	Birmingham Barons	Southern	A	1-2	3	24.0	20	3	18	3.45
1921	Birmingham Barons	Southern	A	21-13	51	325.0	278	114	157	2.88
1921	Pittsburgh Pirates	NATIONAL	MLB	0-0	1	0.2	1	0	1	0.00
1922	Birmingham Barons	Southern	A	22-15	43	300.0	309	116	127	3.45
1923	Two Teams	Southern	A	6-20-3	39	229.0	234	83	79	4.05
1923	Birmingham Barons	Southern	A	1-10-3	16	111.0	110	40	44	4.29
1923	Atlanta Crackers	Southern	A	5-10-0	23	118.0	124	43	35	3.83
1924	Joe Wittmer's D&M	City	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1925	Owensboro Grays	I-K	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1926	Indianapolis Indians	American Association	AA	0-0	6	17.2	13	10	2	3.12
1926	Little Rock Travellers	Southern	A	-	1	-	-	-	-	--
1926	Owensboro Athletics	I-K	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1927	Owensboro Grays	I-K	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1931	Anglo-American Mill	--	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1932	Owensboro Merchants	--	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1932	Knottsville	Daviess-Ohio	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1933	Owensboro Independents	--	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1934	Ken-Rad Tubemakers	--	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
1935	Ken-Rad Tubemakers	--	Ind.	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
Major League Totals		1 Season		0-0	1	0.2	1	0	1	0.00
Minor League Totals		5 Seasons		50-50-3	150	896.1	855	326	384	--

ML Debut & Finale: September 30, 1921 at Sportsmans Park, St. Louis: relieved Rip Wheeler with one out in the bottom of the eighth inning during a 12-4 loss to the St. Louis Cardinals; pitched a scoreless 2/3rds of an inning, allowing one hit (a double to Heinie Mueller) and striking out one (Austin McHenry).

Rankings:

1921 Southern Association 4th in wins (21); 2nd in strikeouts (157); 3rd in innings pitched (325)
 1922 Southern Association 2nd in wins (22); 3rd in strikeouts (127); 3rd in innings pitched (300)
 1923 Southern Association 1st in losses (20); 15th in innings pitched (229)

Phil Morrison, 57, Former Major League Hurler, Dies

Phillip Melvin (Phil) Morrison, Sr., 57, former major and minor league hurler, died at 12:30 a.m. Tuesday in the Veterans Hospital, Lexington, following a long illness.

Phil Morrison (0) and his older brother Johnny (103) combine for 103 victories in their major league careers. In parts of 10 major league seasons, Johnny (nicknamed Jughandle) is 103-80 with a 3.65 ERA and 89 complete games. Jughandle has three children, including a son named **Dwane**, who becomes a college basketball head coach at South Carolina (1964) and Georgia Tech (1974-81).

Life after baseball may have proved to be difficult for Morrison. On numerous occasions and over several years, the *Owensboro Messenger* lists a "Phil Morrison" as being charged with public drunkenness

and disorderly conduct. However, none of the police court articles associate the accused Phil Morrison to the Phil Morrison of this story.

The 1930 United States Federal Census lists his profession as "laborer," his industry as "sewer work," and that he and his family were living with this parents. On January 18, 1955, Morrison, following a lengthy illness, passes away at the Veterans' Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky, at the age of 57.



Dwane Morrison